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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 NDJAMENA 000149

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PARIS AND LONDON FOR AFRICA WATCHERS
DEPT FOR AF/C, AF/RSA, S/CRS AND PRM

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [SU](#) [CD](#)

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT DEBY ON TALKING TO REBELS, THREAT
FROM SUDAN, DEMOCRATIC OPENING, AND C-130S.

CLASSIFIED BY DCM LUCY TAMLYN FOR REASONS 1.4(B) AND
(D)

SUMMARY

¶1. (C) President Deby told Ambassador April 8 that he welcomed U.S. interest in engaging with Chadian rebel factions to encourage them to lay down weapons and seek a peaceful solution to their grievances. Deby asked the United States to support ongoing regional efforts to reduce tensions between Chad and Sudan. He said that a Chadian delegation now in Tripoli is open to meeting with all rebel groups. Deby warned of another imminent attack on the border; reiterated Chad's need for U.S. security support; and inquired as to the status of Chad's request to purchase C-130s. Deby said his government was committed to the August 13 Accord process and to transparent, democratic elections with the support of the international community. Government action to change laws and regulations as required by the August 13 accords had been delayed by the rebel attack in January-February. Deby said that his government would provide a suitable location for a NEC.

¶2. (C) The GOC's "intra-Chadian diplomacy" -- speaking to the various rebels groups -- has been successful in cutting deals with individual rebel groups or factions within larger groups, reintegrating groups and factions in return for money or government jobs. Most recently it has attracted mostly Zaghawa followers of Timan Erdimi's RFC group back to the fold; it claimed publicly last week to have welcomed scores of Mahamat Nouri's Gorane-dominated UFDD group; and it believes it has complicated Nouri's plans by reaching out to non-Gorane fighters in the UFDD coalition. End Summary.

¶3. (U) The Ambassador met with President Deby on April 8. Secretary General Djimrangar Dadnadji, Deputy Director of the Cabinet, Mahamet Saleh Adoum, and DCM (notetaker) attended.

¶4. (C) The Ambassador informed President Deby that the United States continued to be concerned by the security situation in Chad. The USG supports the right of Chad to defend itself from aggression and is working to help Chad in exercising its legitimate right of self-defense. He explained that U.S. diplomatic strategy encompassed three components: Bilaterally, by holding Sudan responsible for what

happens within its territory; multilaterally, through support for EUFOR's and MINURCAT's efforts to stabilize eastern Chad; support for the recently-signed Dakar Accord; and a possible coordinated approach to Khartoum along with UNSC; and by reaching out to Chadian rebels to encourage them to eschew violence and enter into a dialogue for a solution that benefits all Chadians. He told Deby that we have warned rebel chiefs that we consider their armed actions illegitimate and have put them on notice that the international community will not recognize their taking power by force.

15. (C) The Ambassador asked the President to confirm his government's efforts to advance the internal political dialogue, specifying that the international community, including Chad's friends and partners, were keen to see concrete results in both the Commission of Inquiry process and the August 13 Accord process. He also asked whether the Government of Chad supported continued U.S. efforts to dissuade the rebels from force and encourage them to join the political dialogue.

16. (C) President Deby welcomed the points raised by the Ambassador. He stated that Chad welcomed the "new position" of the United States and our support for international efforts underway. He noted that Foreign Minister Allam-mi would participate in the April 10 Contact Group meeting in Libreville. He hoped that the international community understood the plight of the Chadian people. If the Darfur crisis was not resolved, Chadians would continue to suffer and the region ran the risk of descending into chaos, he said.

NDJAMENA 00000149 002 OF 003

CONTACTS WITH CHADIAN REBELS

17. (C) President Deby explained that his government had had many contacts with the armed rebellion (which, in his view, did not deserve to be so called; they were simply tools in the hand of Sudan). He explained that the rebel had no political objectives, but they did seek to "islamicize" and "arabize" Chad, in conformity with Sudanese Government objectives in Chad. Deby said that during the 1980s, Chad had been Sub-Saharan Africa's shield against Libyan expansionism; now it was playing the same role vis-a-vis Sudanese adventurism. He warned that a new attack was brewing, and said that the attacking forces were heavily composed of Sudanese and Janjaweed fighters. President Deby explained that the Arab League needed to pressure Sudan to change its policy towards its neighbors. He mentioned that in his last trip to Cairo he had met with Arab League Ambassadors to send this message.

18. (C) President Deby stated that the United States could help persuade the rebels to abandon violence. He added that the United States could also help support efforts by countries in the region to reinforce the Sirte accords. He noted that he had sent a delegation to Tripoli to meet with rebels; that they had been talking to one of the rebel groups - Erdimi's Zaghawa-based RFC - but that they were still there waiting for others to respond. Deby acknowledged that the Sirte Accords might not be perfect. "If there are things they don't like, we'll look at that." He confirmed that the Tripoli talks were focused primarily on the RFC, but were also open to all Chadian rebel groups. In fact, a Libyan plane was waiting in El-Geneina to take those rebels that wished to travel to Tripoli. President Deby stressed

that he needed U.S. assistance on the security front, and asked the United States to engage with those countries that were looking for a solution.

¶9. (c) Concerning Sudan rebels, Deby admitted that "some" had been in Chad, but at the same time he repeated that the international community had not done much to resolve the Darfur crisis. In the meantime, Chad's security was endangered, its population was suffering, and its environment was negatively impacted by the presence of refugees.

INTERNAL POLITICAL DIALOGUE

¶10. (C) Turning to the internal political situation, President Deby said that his intention was to go forward with the August 13 process and hold transparent, democratic elections with the support of the international community. President Deby affirmed that these were commitments that the government had made, and it was time to put them in place. The government had been ready to implement the changes to the laws and regulations required by the August 13 accords, but the rebel attack in February had delayed actions.

C-130s

¶11. (C) President Deby reminded the Ambassador that the government was still waiting for information on the sale of the C-130s. Chad needed transport capacity. He hoped that the large "economic partnership" which the United States and Chad enjoyed, presumably referring to the ExxonMobil-led petroleum operation, would be taken into account when considering Chad's requests.

¶12. (C) The Ambassador responded that the United States was committed to trying to satisfy Chad's legitimate need for military air transport. The C-130 issue was being worked on - the process might not be moving as fast as some hoped, but it was certainly moving - and more information would be transmitted as

NDJAMENA 00000149 003 OF 003

soon as it was available. The Ambassador told Deby that the USG was planning to restart security assistance in the counterterrorism field, suspended after the February crisis, to help Chad defend its sovereign territory. Training for Chadian military units was scheduled for June and September in Pala and Faya Largeau, respectively.

LAND FOR NEC

¶13. (SBU) The President also asked about the status of the U.S. Embassy's request for a site for a new Embassy and where matters stood with the Government's offer of the former National Assembly site. The Ambassador explained that we were still awaiting a response in writing from the government with additional information on prospective sites and that we needed several sites from which to choose the most suitable.

COMMENT

¶14. (C) The GOC has been active in "intra-Chadian

diplomacy" -- speaking to the various rebels groups -- in both formal settings (like the Sirte talks of 2007) and informally for some time. It prefers the informal path, which permits it to cut deals with individual groups or factions within larger groups, reintegrating groups and factions in return for money or government jobs. It has had success most recently in attracting mostly Zaghawa followers of Timan Erdimi's RFC group back to the fold. The GOC also claimed publicly last week to have welcomed a hundred or so of Mahamat Nouri's Gorane-dominated UFDD group and believes it has complicated Nouri's plans by reaching out to non-Gorane, especially Ouaddaian, fighters in the UFDD coalition.

¶15. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.

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